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Quotable Quote

"Once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in war."

— Ernest Hemingway

Air Force Reserve Command selects new command chief

Command Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett was selected as the top enlisted member for Air Force Reserve Command. He succeeds Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl D. Adams, who served as the AFRC command chief master sergeant since February 2001. See related story on page 6.
(Courtesy photo)



Officials not destroying military personnel files

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (AFP) — National Archives and Records Administration officials here are not destroying any military records, they said.

The officials said they are trying to counter an Internet rumor advising veterans to apply for their official military personnel files to save them from destruction.

There is no truth to this "urban legend" being perpetuated on the Web.

"We heard it about a month ago," said Susan Cooper, the archive's public affairs officer.

The records are stored at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis where officials said there has been a rise in the number of veterans requesting their records.

This takes time away from other legitimate requests, such as veterans request-

ing separation documents or medical records.

"We have a limited number of people to do the work and anything that ramps the requests up this quickly is a big production issue with us," said John Constance, NARA's director of congressional and public affairs.

"We are going to digitize some (records) for reference and preservation," said Ms. Cooper. "When records are handled frequently, it causes some wear and tear. The idea is to preserve (the records), not destroy them."

Officials said the paper records remain intact.

NARA preserves and protects the files because they are permanently valuable records that document the essential evidence of military service for veterans.

The bottom line is if people receive this sort of e-mail, they should ignore it, officials said.

Angels in our midst — The Dover port mortuary

By Col. Jim Kottkamp

Reserve medical forces advisor to the Air Force surgeon general

BOLLING AIR FORCE BASE, D.C. (AFPN) — I recently had the privilege of visiting the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs at Dover Air Force Base, Del.

This visit was an incredible education about the realities of war; the extensive lengths the services go through to work with the families of the fallen heroes; and a deeper understanding of the dedication to excellence of some very special staff members of the port mortuary team and associated volunteers.

There is so much that many of us don't think about when seeing the coffin of one of our fallen heroes. The staff of the port mortuary, under the direction of Ms. Karen Giles, deals with the raw reality of military combat and transforms what the battlefield gives up into honored remains in an effort to support the families whose loved ones have given their all.

Ms. Giles and Lt. Col. Susan Hanshaw, an Air Force Reserve registered nurse, escorted a group of us from Air Force Medical Service Headquarters through the mortuary. They

introduced us to most of the eight full-time staff and many volunteers who provide assistance whenever needed.

When the fallen heroes arrive, the first and most important procedure is to begin the identification process. The majority of fallen heroes arrive with a presumed name, until irrefutable identification can be accomplished. The mortuary staff approaches this aspect with unfaltering dedication to detail, a no-stone-unturned approach to excellence. Once a case number is assigned to the remains, the next procedure is to perform a whole-body x-ray of the remains.

This is accomplished by explosive ordnance disposal people. The purpose of this X-ray is to be certain there is no unexploded ordnance on or in the remains. All such ordnance must be removed to prevent injury of the mortuary staff tasked with identification and burial preparations.

The next step in the journey is to provide a positive identification of the body. This is done with fingerprints, dental x-rays or DNA.

See "Angels" on page 8

Air Force leaders send Veterans Day message

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — The following is a Veterans Day message from Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper:

"Each year, America honors its veterans for the sacrifices and hard-fought successes of so many of its citizens — those who have worn the uniform as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen and Marines.

"The original Armistice Day recognized the cease-fire signed by Germany and the Allied powers on Nov. 11, 1918. This concluded the hostilities of World War I, known as the "War to end all wars." Over two million service members of the American Expeditionary Force fought bravely on and over the battlefields of Europe.

"Today, our expeditionary Air Force continues the fight in defense of

freedom around the world against a resilient enemy who opposes our way of life.

"Since those challenging days at the dawn of the 20th century to the awakening hours of the 21st century, we have witnessed major wars and countless conflicts. One constant has remained: the commitment of those who served and continue to serve our nation in forever challenging times — our veterans. We honor their memory for what they have done to keep America and the world safe.

"To our Airmen who continue the fight against those who have made America their target, we salute you.

"We thank you and your families for your constant vigil and your continuing sacrifices.

"May God bless you and the United States of America."

2004 Veterans Day ceremony

The Veterans Day National Ceremony takes place at the Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Amphitheater on Nov. 11. The ceremony begins promptly at 11 a.m. The ceremony is free and seating is open to the public, but everyone must be seated by 10:30 a.m. The ceremony ends at approximately 12 noon.

Due to security measures, it is important to arrive early. Tourmobile buses will provide free shuttle service from the cemetery visitors' center to the amphitheater. The visitors' center is a short walk from the Arlington National Cemetery stop on Metro's Blue Line.

Parking is also available at the visitors' center. To avoid problems with security, please bring only those items necessary for comfort. Umbrellas, blankets, ponchos, cameras, etc. are acceptable.

Air Reserve Personnel

UPDATE

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Veterans Day - Nov. 11

In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington, D.C., became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans.

Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France, where an unknown soldier was buried in each nation's highest place of honor (in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe). These memorial gestures all took place on Nov. 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 a.m., Nov. 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). The day became known as "Armistice Day."

Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar Congressional action. If the idealistic hope had been realized that World War I was "the War to end all wars," Nov. 11 might still be called Armistice Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. Sixteen and one-half

million Americans took part. Four hundred seven thousand of them died in service, more than 292,000 in battle.

Armistice Day changed to honor all veterans

The first celebration using the term Veterans Day occurred in Birmingham, Ala., in 1947. Raymond Weeks, a World War II veteran, organized "National Veterans Day," which included a parade and other festivities, to honor all veterans. The event was held on Nov. 11, then designated Armistice Day. Later, U.S. Representative Edward Rees of Kansas proposed a bill that would change Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In 1954, Congress passed the bill that President Eisenhower signed proclaiming Nov. 11 as Veterans Day. Raymond Weeks received the Presidential Citizens Medal from President Reagan in Nov. 1982. Weeks' local parade and ceremonies are now an annual event celebrated nationwide.

On Memorial Day 1958, two more unidentified American war dead were brought from overseas and interred in the plaza

beside the unknown soldier of World War I. One was killed in World War II, the other in the Korean War. In 1984, an unknown serviceman from the Vietnam War was placed alongside the others. The remains from Vietnam were exhumed May 14, 1998, identified

as Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie, and removed for burial. To honor these men, symbolic of all Americans who gave their lives in all wars, an Army honor guard, the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard), keeps day and night vigil.

A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. It soon became apparent, however, that Nov. 11 was a date of historic significance to many Americans. Therefore, in 1978, Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

National ceremonies held at Arlington National Cemetery

The focal point for official, national ceremonies for Veterans Day continues to be the memorial amphitheater built around the Tomb of the Unknowns. At 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, a combined color guard representing all military services executes



"Present Arms" at the tomb. The nation's tribute to its war dead is symbolized by the laying of a presidential wreath. The bugler plays "taps." The rest of the ceremony takes place in the amphitheater.

Veterans Day ceremonies at Arlington and elsewhere are coordinated by the President's Veterans Day National Committee. Chaired by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the committee represents national veterans organizations.

Governors of many states and U.S. territories appoint Veterans Day chairpersons who, in cooperation with the National Committee and the Department of Defense, arrange and promote local ceremonies.

Additional information

Additional information on the history of Veterans Day, the Veterans Day National Committee, the national ceremony, a gallery of Veterans Day posters from 1978 to the present and a colorful and informative Veterans Day Teacher's Resource Guide can be found on the Internet at <http://www.va.gov/vetsday/>



CHIEF's Sight Picture

Stressed Airmen

Who's Your Wingman?

By Gen. John P. Jumper
Air Force Chief of Staff

Stress is nothing new to military life and there are many factors that contribute to this. But lately, stress has been taking its toll on our Airmen.

Our suicide rate is skyrocketing while accidental deaths are more than 36 percent above what they were four years ago. We lost 57 people to suicide in the past year – a dramatic, and tragic, increase from last year.

We lost another 99 Airmen to accidents. Combined, that's an order of magnitude greater than our combat losses in both Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001.

We're causing ourselves more harm than the enemy. We must do a better job of looking after one another – be better wingmen. Our jobs are inherently stressful. This is a fact of our profession.

We have more than 30,000 Airmen deployed across the globe, with over 7,000 of them in a combat environment. Many Airmen are now on their sixth deployment in ten years.

Those at home face increased work hours, inconsistent manning, and a continuous workload. More stress comes from uncertainty.

In addition, increased AEF deployment periods, force restructuring, Non-Commissioned Officer retraining, and OSD's BRAC assessments and potential base closures may suggest an ambiguous or unstable future to some Airmen. This can often lead to other stress factors, like family or relationship problems, financial or legal problems, and substance abuse. We are taking steps to mitigate some of these factors, but stress will always be a concern.

Stress is a problem we can manage. The Air Force leadership is confronting this problem. We cannot relieve the tempo of deployment. When our nation calls, we must respond.

However, we can and will work to provide our Airmen with the support they need to carry their load. We are reinvigorating our

suicide prevention program that had dramatically dropped the number of suicides over the past seven years.

The program worked, but it needs a shot in the arm. Along with suicide prevention, we're continuing to focus on safety and risk management, with zero mishaps as our goal.

November begins the busy holiday season. This is a time of celebration, but also a time when stress rises. Our Major Commands will be placing special emphasis on stress-related issues during the month of November.

We will: reemphasize the support services available; review the signs of stress; and remind all Airmen what it means to look out for each other – to be good wingmen.

However, this problem cannot be solved through programs and training sessions alone. It's going to take an effort from the whole force, from our commanders and supervisors to every Airman in the force. It will take your total commitment.

Commanders – you bear the responsibility for the total welfare of our greatest asset – Airmen. You are responsible for their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. Use your base resources. You should know when your Airmen need help, and where to send them to get it.

Supervisors – you are our first line of defense. Like commanders, you are responsible for the well-being of the people you supervise. It is you who look every Airman in the eye every day. It is you who can spot the first signs of trouble, and you who are in the best position to listen and engage.

Airmen – be good wingmen. Take care of yourself and those around you. Step in when your wingman needs help. Signs of stress and suicide should not be dismissed. Neither should senseless risks to life and limb because of improper safety and irresponsible behavior.

In today's expeditionary Air Force, commanders and supervisors are often deployed. We rely on those who remain behind as acting commanders and supervisors to be familiar with the stresses confronting their Airmen and to be familiar with all the tools necessary to deal with these stresses.

I need everyone's help on this. Take care of your wingmen on the ground so we can continue to confront America's enemies from air and space. Stress is not going away; it is a reality we must accept and manage.

We are the world's greatest Air and Space Power because of you, America's Airmen. The needless loss of one Airman is one loss too many. Look out for each other – look out for your wingman.

Credit card information needed for tours

Due to regulatory changes, members are now required to indicate whether or not they have a government charge card on the Tour Information page in Web Orders Transaction System upon inputting a tour

request. A statement to that affect will appear on the members orders.

All individual mobilization augmentees are encouraged to have a government charge card for reimbursable travel ex-

penses prior to performing tours. Please call the Agency Program Coordinator to ensure the charge card is active and in good standing, prior to making travel arrangements.



Staying Blue Cuz, sir

Technical Sgt. Lyle G. Gehring (left), an individual mobilization augmentee with the 75th Logistics Readiness Squadron at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, wanted to stay with the Air Force. He was able to stay in the "Blue" with the help of his cousin, Colonel Allan S. Netzer, Director,

Deterrence and Strike Acquisition Program Office, ICBM Wing (right). Tech. Sgt. Gehring reenlisted in the Air Force Reserve Oct. 19 at Hill AFB. With his reenlistment, the Air Force continues to retain high level NCOs as Tech. Sgt. Gehring was selected as the 2003 Transportation component NCO of the Year for the Air Force Material Command. (Courtesy photo)

Memo improves members' job protection

WASHINGTON — Attorney General John Ashcroft and Labor Secretary Elaine Chao have signed a memorandum of understanding to ensure employment rights of people returning from military service are vigorously protected.

The memo streamlines and strengthens enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. Congress passed the act to safeguard the employment rights and benefits of service members upon their return to civilian life.

"The brave men and women protected by (the act) voluntarily set aside the comforts of civilian life and stepped in harm's way," Mr. Ashcroft said. "We owe it to them to make sure that their employment rights and protections are fully and vigorously protected upon their return from military service."

"Our (service members) have been there for us, so now it's our turn to step up our efforts for them," Ms. Chao said. "This agreement will strengthen enforcement of (the act) by ensuring faster resolution of (its) cases and quicker enforcement action by the government when it is necessary."

The memorandum deals exclusively with each department's role and responsibilities in the enforcement of the act. The attorney general delegated his responsibilities

to the civil rights division of the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorneys' offices.

The Department of Labor delegated its responsibilities to the veterans' employment and training service and the office of the solicitor. The memorandum streamlines the enforcement process, allowing the two agencies to work closely and effectively to ensure the protection of service mem-

bers' rights. When a complaint raises an "issue of immediate and significant harm" and each agency agrees that the complaint appears legitimate, it may be referred for enforcement immediately, officials said. This prevents two agencies from working on the same issue, wasting time and resources.

Department of Labor officials also issued new regulations strengthening the act's protections. Besides the new regulations, Ms. Chao and the DOL's veterans' employment and training services have taken other steps to reduce the rate of violations, including:

- Providing briefings to more than 158,000 service members and others on the act.

- Responding to almost 26,000 requests for technical assistance.

- Distributing more than 240 televised public service announcements.

- Addressing most of the major human resource and employer organizations. (Courtesy American Forces Press Service)

"The brave men and women protected by (the act) voluntarily set aside the comforts of civilian life and stepped in harm's way."

-- Attorney General John Ashcroft

Preventing the flu, without the vaccine

Staff Sgt. Jennifer Thibault

Air Force Space Command Public Affairs

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. - News reports are spreading the word, there's a shortage of flu vaccines; there will not be enough vaccines for everyone this year.

Some are not too moved by these reports, as they didn't like getting the shots anyway. However, for others the idea of getting the flu is scary and the shot more than necessary. Despite this year's predicted shortage, there are other preventative measures people can take to defend themselves during the influenza season.

In order to fight against the flu, one must first understand how it's spread.

"The flu spreads in respiratory droplets caused by coughing and sneezing," said Lt. Col. Fred Kelsey, Air Force Space Command Office of the Command Surgeon. "It usually spreads from person to person, though occasionally a person may become infected by touching something with the virus on it and then touching their mouth or nose."

Simple steps, preached by kindergarten teachers and moms across the world come to mind that can help defend against the bacteria and germs that cause and spread the flu.

- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands often
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- When sick, stay home and avoid close contact with others
- Other tips to stay healthy during the flu season and all year long: get plenty of rest, engage in physical activity, manage stress, drink lots of water and eat healthy food.

Available vaccines will be distributed to high risk personnel based on developed guidelines. Those guidelines are still being

ironed out but are expected to include:

- Deploying personnel
- Children six to 23 months
- Adults aged 65 years or older
- Persons aged two to 64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions
- All women who will be pregnant during the influenza season
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
- Children aged six months to 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy
- Health care workers involved in direct patient care
- Out of home caregivers and household contacts of children aged less than six months

These people are considered priority for the available vaccines, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website.

Those in the priority groups, are considered at a high risk for developing serious flu complications or are in contact with people at high risk for serious flu complications, according to Colonel Kelsey.

Some of these complications include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes. Children may get sinus problems and ear infections.

Although there is the chance for serious complications in the high risk group discussed above, most victims of the flu endure the following symptoms:

- Fever, usually high
- Headache
- Extreme tiredness
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Gastro-intestinal symptoms, i.e., nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, mostly in children

More information on the vaccine and how it will be distributed through the Air Force is expected to be released in a week or so. In the meantime, for more information on this year's influenza season, vaccines and flu preventative measures, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>.

AFRC "Employee Purchase Program"

Recently the Air Force Reserve Command received approval to establish the "Employee Purchase Program" for Microsoft desktop software for all AFRC employees.

This includes all AFRC military, civil service, and contractors with a government (af.mil) e-mail address.

The EPP gives AFRC employees the right to install the latest release of Microsoft's Office Professional software (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, and Access) on their home computers.

The EPP is a valuable benefit of the enterprise agreement, and it is hoped that it will enhance the productivity of AFRC members.

The procedures outlined below will al-

low those personnel on **AFRC's 16 main bases and tenant units** to obtain Microsoft applications for home use under this program.

To access the Microsoft Home Use Program web site, please follow the steps below.

Go to <https://epp.microsoft.com>

Select the country to which the order is to be shipped and choose the language for viewing the order Web site.

Enter the members corporate e-mail address (must end with af.mil) and insert the following program code: **38BFBF7F20**.

Note: this program code is assigned to AFRC for the sole use in accessing this site.

Members must not share this number

with anyone outside AFRC.

An e-mail will be automatically sent to the e-mail address members provide that will include a link to the Web site where the order will be processed.

Place order online and it will be shipped to the location the members chose. A fulfillment fee of \$21.50 will be charged to the members personal credit card to cover shipping and handling costs.

The procedures above will not work for AFRC personnel stationed at non-AFRC bases.

Those individuals should go to the AFRC page on the Air Force Portal to receive detailed instructions on how they can enroll in the AFRC Home Use Program.

For more information call Lucille Green or Maxine Glover, DSN 497-1562.

AFRC welcomes new command chief

By 1st Lt. Lance Patterson
AFRC Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett becomes the Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant later this year, AFRC officials said Sept. 28.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander, selected Chief Winsett from among 20 nominees for the position. Air Force reservists from all categories — traditional reservists, individual mobilization augmentees, air reserve technicians and Active Guard Reserve members — applied for the command's top enlisted position.

Chief Winsett has been the command chief for 10th Air Force at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas, since May 2000. He will be the fourth command chief that AFRC has had since its inception as a major command in 1997 and the 12th person to hold the job in the Air Force Reserve since March 1973.

The position is a 3-year controlled tour

at Robins AFB. The duties involve communicating with the commander on problems, concerns, morale and attitudes of the enlisted force and, in turn, ensuring the commander's policies are known and understood by the enlisted force.

"My concern is for the enlisted force and the utilization of the force," said Chief Winsett. "I anticipate working hard for the next 36 months ensuring the needs of the enlisted corps are met."

Chief Winsett will succeed Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl D. Adams, who has served as the AFRC command chief master sergeant since February 2001.

She was the first African-American woman to hold the title of command chief on active duty for a major command. Chief Adams is being considered for a position within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. If selected she will report for duty in the Pentagon as early as Dec. 1.

Chief Winsett entered the Air Force Reserve in 1981 after serving initially on ac-

tive duty in the U.S. Army from 1966 to 1969 with tours in Berlin, Germany, and in the Republic of Vietnam.

His duties in the Air Force Reserve included assignments as an administrative specialist, military personnel flight specialist, group career advisor, first-sergeant and command chief master sergeant.

He served as the senior enlisted advisor for the 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., before becoming the command chief for 10th Air Force.

In his civilian career, Chief Winsett worked for the Federal Deposit Insurance Co. and owned a consulting firm. He retired from both occupations, devoting the last three years to full-time service in the Air Force Reserve.

Chief Winsett lived in Lexana, Kan., since 1989 where he was a traditional reservist. He is married and the father of one daughter and two sons.

Chief Winsett holds a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and business and a master of arts degree in business and counseling. (AFRC News Service)

DOD expands Anthrax, Smallpox vaccination programs

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — Department of Defense is expanding its anthrax and smallpox immunization programs following an evaluation conducted by the Military Health System. Air Force officials released service-specific guidance recently.

Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, announced that the anthrax and smallpox vaccination programs would include selected units within U.S. Pacific Command, people in U.S. Central Command and other selected groups.

"The decision to protect additional personnel with these vaccines reflects our concern for their health and safety, as well as the continuity of essential operations," Dr. Winkenwerder said.

"When we began these vaccination programs, we stated that we would periodically review them, evaluating the threats to our forces and vaccine availability," he said. "We recently completed such an evaluation and determined that the threat continues. In light of our successful implementation of these programs and the increased quantities of vaccine, we will include additional forces in the vaccination programs."

Before the anthrax vaccination program slowdown in 2000 and 2001, caused by an unexpected shortage of anthrax vaccine, service members assigned to certain areas in the U.S. Pacific Command were included in the program. The resumption of the program in 2002, however, focused on the U.S. Central Command.

The expansion of the program announced by Dr. Winkenwerder resumes the anthrax vaccination program and begins the smallpox vaccination program in selected U.S. Pacific Command areas. It also expands the anthrax vaccination program within the U.S. Central Command. Vaccination offers a necessary extra layer of protection — besides antibiotics and other measures — for service members, emergency-essential civilians and contractors who carry out mission-essential services, DOD officials said.

The program update continues to include people assigned in or deployed to designated higher-threat areas for 15 or more consecutive days. Officials will offer the vaccinations to family members in the geographic areas on a voluntary basis. They will also pursue vaccination, subject to appropriate people and contractor procedures, of emergency-essential

civilian employees and comparable contractors in the specific geographic areas.

Currently, only people deemed to be at higher risk in specified units or geographic areas will receive the vaccines. Officials did not rule out vaccination of the total force at a future date. Air Force immunizations under the policy update will begin as soon as units schedule vaccinations.

For more information, visit the Commanders' C-CBRNE Resource secure Web site at https://www.xo.hq.af.mil/xos/xosf/xosfc/CCBRNE_resource/index.shtml.



General Bradley sends holiday season greetings

By Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley

Commander of Air Force Reserve Command

WASHINGTON — As we celebrate the holiday season and prepare for the challenges of 2005, I want to thank the men and women of Air Force Reserve Command for their dedication and service to our nation.

You have done everything our nation has called upon you to do. You guard the door, so we can enjoy the freedoms our country has to offer.

Many of you have been mobilized and

separated from your families, friends and place of work. Others have volunteered to do your part in fighting the Global War on Terrorism.

Several hundred of you remain overseas, away from family and friends during this holiday season.

My thoughts and prayers are with you and your loved ones at this time.

I commend all of you for putting service above self, for letting integrity and honor guide your actions

and for striving to do the best in all you do. Your selfless acts of courage are an inspiration to us all.

When Jan and I count our blessings this year, the men and women of Air Force Reserve Command will top our list. You are the best.

Happy holidays and have a safe and joyous New Year from the Bradley

family. (AFRC News Service)



Angels from page 2

This is accomplished by two FBI agents who voluntarily serve one-week tours of duty to conduct the fingerprinting identification.

One agent does the research and the second agent reviews and certifies the identification.

If a fingerprint ID is made, dental X-rays are still made in order to cross reference the identification; again, no stone is left unturned.

The dental X-rays are accomplished by volunteer members of the digital forensic technology team, a dedicated group whose motto is "dignity first."

If neither fingerprints nor dental X-rays can be used to provide identification, then DNA analysis must be used to positively identify our fallen heroes.

Complete body X-rays, in a specially designed machine, then help the staff to determine cause of death. This X-ray can also be used to double check identification. Once positive identification is determined, an examiner from the Armed Forces medical examiners office conducts the autopsy.

The Sept. 11, 2001, attacks were a watershed for the services in dealing with the remains of our fallen heroes. Today, families are no longer satisfied with letters stating that their loved ones perished in line of duty to our country. Mothers, fathers and spouses want to know how their loved ones died. Was it friendly fire, fratricide?

Most are seeking answers to their loved ones' last moments, and the forensic staff strives to answer all their questions and assist in gaining insight into the passing of those loved ones.

Immediately following the autopsy, the remains are embalmed and then proceed to the cosmetology and burial preparation area. In this area, the professional staff strives to prepare the fallen heroes not just for their funeral, but, in many cases, for their final reunion with their families.

At the time of our visit, there were eight fallen heroes in this area, each in a service dress uniform minus the service dress

jacket. The service dress jackets had already been fitted and were in the process of being tailored and having the correct ribbons, rank and insignia placed on them.

Excellence is evident throughout all areas of the mortuary, but none can compare with the loving attention to detail shown during this final step in preparation. Every badge, belt buckle, insignia, and ribbon attachment was shined and perfect — no exceptions.

Another very striking example of the care taken by the Dover team was found in the uniform preparation area, where we couldn't help but notice a large Rubbermaid trash container chock full of new Marine Corps uniforms.

Ms. Giles told us a Marine master gunnery sergeant had gone through a new shipment of Marine uniforms and determined these uniforms had flaws in them and were not fit to be worn by his troops!

As our fallen heroes are being prepared for their family reunions, their personal effects are gathered and readied for inventory and presentation to the families. This is where the crushing blow of sacrifice is most evident.

Their watches were still set on Baghdad time, the photos of family and friends tell of the heart wrenching grief to be suffered. Among the heroes' personal effects, the single most prevalent items were the pre-paid phone cards, testaments to the heroes' desire to keep in touch with their loved ones. These calls would never be made.

The families select the type of casket for their loved ones. After a fallen hero is lovingly placed in the casket, another volunteer — the military escort — comes forward to be with these heroes every step of the way home to their final place of rest.

As I said earlier, the visit to the port mortuary was a privilege. It was humbling to meet the Dover team, to hear the ring of love, care and dedication to excellence in every corner of the facility.

To shake hands and look into the eyes of those who truly know the horror of war, yet find it within themselves to provide aid where most could not, was an awesome experience indeed.

TSP open season underway

by Master Sgt. Randy L. Mitchell
Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN)—Military members can sign up for, or change, their Thrift Savings Plan contribution amounts during the “open season” through Dec. 31.

“TSP is a long-term retirement savings plan, which everyone should consider,” said Senior Master Sgt. Felipe Ortiz, superintendent of the Air Force Personnel Contact Center here. “It’s a great supplement to military and civilian retirement plans.”

This open season applies only to regular TSP contributions. It does not include TSP catch-up contributions, as they are not tied to open seasons, said Janet Thomas of AFPC’s civilian benefits and entitlements service team.

TSP offers investors the chance for lower taxes each year they contribute, while not having to pay taxes on earnings until they reach retirement.

“Eligible employees can take out loans and make in-service withdrawals from their TSP accounts,” Ms. Thomas said. “And you can keep your account, even if you leave military or federal civilian service.”

Investment money is deposited directly from each paycheck “so you never have to think about it,” Sergeant Ortiz said. “That makes it easy to ‘pay yourself first’ while only investing what you deem appropriate.”

The five TSP funds are: the Government Securities Investment (G) Fund; the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund; the Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund; the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund; and the International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund.

Contribution elections or changes made between Oct. 15 and Dec. 11 will take effect Dec. 12, for both military and civilian

employees. Changes made on or after Dec. 12 will become effective at the beginning of the pay period following the one in which the election is made for civilians and the following month for military.

Some of the specifics of the program include:

— Military members can contribute up to 10 percent of their

base

pay, as

long as

the annual

total of tax-deferred investment

does not exceed

\$14,000 for 2005. Air-

men also have the ability

to invest all or part

of their bonuses or

special pay.

— Those serving

in tax-free

combat zones are

allowed up to \$41,000

in annual contributions.

— Servicemembers can

enroll through the Defense Finance

and Accounting Service Web

site at www.dfas.mil/emss/. They can

also enroll by filling out a TSP-U-1 form

at local military personnel flights, finance

offices or family support centers.

— Contribution allocations (how an employee

chooses to invest money among the five funds) can be made by

calling the TSP automated ThriftLine, (877) 968-3778 for employees

in the 50 States, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, American

Samoa and Canada; (504) 255-8777 for employees elsewhere, or

on the TSP Web site at www.tsp.gov/.

— For general questions, call the AFPC contact center at (800)

616-3775. Specific TSP information is available for Airmen at

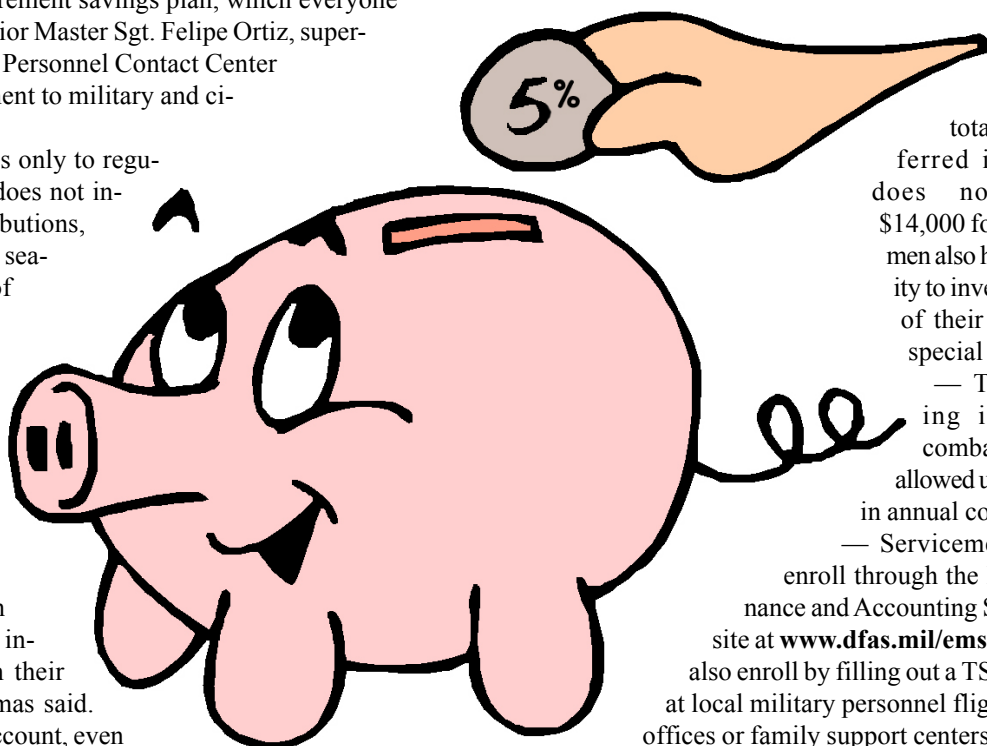
www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/mpf/TSP/thrift_savings_plan.htm.

More information about the Thrift Savings Plan can be found

in the booklet “Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan” on the home

page under civilian or uniformed services TSP Forms and Publications.

(Courtesy of AFPC News Service)



Chaplain news

Atlanta in April

Mark your calendar for April 19 - 21, 2005 and plan to take part in the first Air Force Reserve Chaplain Service Worldwide Workshop. The event will take place in Atlanta and will combine IMA and unit personnel in one training conference.

Watch your mail, e-mail, and the Update for further developments and details!

New Captains

Best wishes to the following chaplains who have been selected for promotion to Captain:

Heather Bodwell, Hugh B. Cottrell, David Daus, Lawrence Freedman, William Greaver, Jason Kim, Larry Loree, Ann Luna, Joshua Payne, Richard Savell, Travis Sears, Elaine Tallman, Anthony Turpin.

JAG and paralegal news

Active Duty tours reminders

With a decreasing budget resulting in tighter restrictions, it is important that IMAs and paralegals comply with program requirements. Here are a few reminders:

- ✓ IMAs must never begin a tour without first ensuring the tour is approved by ARPC/JA. There have been an increasing number of IMAs that are beginning tours only to find out that the tour cannot be funded by ARPC/JA. A common misconception occurs when the requesting office states they are funding the tour, but they're only referring to the travel and per diem. The pay and allowances come from ARPC/JA so it is essential they ensure these funds are available prior to the tour start date.

- ✓ Annual tours must be scheduled so that there are no holidays, family days or down days within the tour.

- ✓ When submitting a WOTS request, it is important that the IMA indicate whether or not they have a Government Travel Card. If the member does not have a GTC, tickets will not be issued until the order is published. This is another reason it is so important to submit all tour requests at least 30 days in advance (60 days for school tour orders).

- ✓ IMAs must go through a Government Contracted Ticket Office or SATO to obtain airline tickets. They must never go directly to the airline or through a personal travel agent. They must also use their GTC to purchase the ticket. This will ensure reimbursement when filing their travel voucher.

Projected annual schedule by August 15

Each IMA and supervisor together must develop a projected schedule for their fiscal year (Oct. 1-Sept. 30) requirements: 12 days of annual tour and 12 days (24 periods) of IDT.

The schedule must be coordinated with the active duty supervisor. A copy is placed in the IMA's participation folder at the unit of attachment and a copy is forwarded to ARPC/JA no later than Aug. 15 each year. If this has not been completed for FY 05 yet, please do so immediately.

This schedule is to be developed as a planning tool for the member and the unit of attachment supervisor. This can be ad-

justed if necessary but it must be done in advance in coordination with the supervisor. IMAs should NEVER show up at the legal office without prior coordination with their supervisor.

This allows the supervisor to prepare for work assignments and a work station as necessary.

Also, cancellations should be done well in advance so the legal office will not be caught short-handed when they have counted on the IMA to show up. A few reminders:

- ✓ AT must not include any holidays, family days or down days

- ✓ AT must not start or end on a weekend or holiday

- ✓ Travel days do not count toward satisfying the 12-day AT requirement

- ✓ Substitution of school tour for any portion of the AT must be approved in advance by checking the appropriate block in WOTS

- ✓ Special tours in support of AEF missions or current operations (e.g. OEF, ONE, OIF) may be approved in advance for AT credit. No other MPA or RPA tours will be approved for AT credit

- ✓ AT must be scheduled in WOTS prior to requesting or performing any additional MPA or RPA special tours

- ✓ No more than four days/eight periods of IDT are permitted in a quarter:

- 1st Quarter is Oct. 1 - Dec. 31

- 2nd Quarter is Jan. 1 - March 31

- 3rd Quarter is April 1 - June 30

- 4th Quarter is July 1 - Sept. 30

All documentation (projected schedule, certified orders, AF Forms 40A, etc.) should also be filed in the member's participation folder at the unit of attachment.

Scheduling and meeting fiscal year requirements is the responsibility of both the IMA and their supervisor.

Hails and farewells

ARPC/JA bids farewell to Master Sgt. Jay Dorris as she heads off to be a law office manager at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

Welcome Technical Sgt Wanda Grady who comes to ARPC from Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Web site devoted to financial education

The federal government recently rolled out **mymoney**, a Web site devoted to financial education.

DoD is one of 20 US government agencies involved in this effort to give all Americans a single entry point for all federal financial literacy and education programs.

Among the topics the site covers are

- Budgeting and taxes
- Credit
- Financial planning
- Starting a small business

• Saving and investing

The site also offers a free financial tool kit that in-cludes ways to start looking at financial options such as savings, investing, credit and Social Security benefits.

DoD became part of the project because of the extensive financial tools it already has available.

Senior leaders are saying...

The leadership of DoD is pleased to be part of this effort.

The mymoney Web site and hotline are great resources for service members and their families to obtain free, credible, unbiased information on personal finance from agencies in the federal govt. (*OSD-P&R, Oct 04*)

For access to the mymoney Web site, log on to <http://www.mymoney.gov/>.

To order the mymoney financial tool kit, go to <http://www.mymoney.gov/mymoneyorder.shtml> or call dial toll-free 1-888-MYMONEY (696-6639).

Historians needed to fill billets

The Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and the Air Force History Office at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington D.C., has openings for both officer and enlisted Historians.

The billets at both locations are "Category B" individual mobilization augmentee slots, requiring IMAs to perform a minimum of 12 days of inactive duty for training per year and 12 days of annual training at either Maxwell Air Force Base or Bolling Air Force Base.

Applicants must be willing to deploy overseas. Some limited military personnel appropriations tours are available.

The mission is to provide a rapid reaction corps of historians ready for worldwide deployments as well as critical staff support needed at AFHRA and other requesting agencies.

In the past, IMAs have deployed in support of operations and contingencies in Somalia, Rwanda, the air war over Serbia, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM and OP-

ERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, just to name a few.

Recently, IMAs have responded to requests for assistance supporting Special Operations Command, European Command, Pacific Air Forces, Central Command and the Joint History Office in the Pentagon.

Qualifications include a wide variety of talents. This office prefers to hire people with a background in history or political science, but practical military experience can be substituted.

A top secret clearance is preferred. Excellent administrative and computer skills are a must since deployments usually include computers and scanners used to collect copious amounts of information in electronic format.

When deployed, IMA historians usually comprise a two to four person Contingency Historical Information Preservation Team that performs data collection, written history support, oral interviews and preservation of historically significant documen-

tation.

This office is also responsible for identifying, acquiring and organizing historical materials for safe analysis and evaluation.

When people think about history, they shouldn't just ponder the past. This is an outstanding opportunity to see the Air Force in action. This office records current operations and the decision-making process that lead up to those events as they happen.

Anyone interested in this challenging and rewarding assignment is encouraged to apply.

Submit applications to: Master Sgt. Christine Mackey, program manager at the

Air Force Historical Research Agency
600 Chennault Circle
Maxwell AFB, AL 36112-6424

Or via e-mail:

Christine.mackey@maxwell.af.mil.

Application should include a completed and signed AF Form 1288, a resume and your last five military performance reports.

Uniform board incorporates feedback, alters design

By Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski
Air Force Print News

Based on feedback from the six-month wear test, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper decided to expand the current test program to include a pixelated tiger-striped pattern in a new color scheme on the proposed utility uniform.

The expansion does not involve a full test; instead, there will be a limited production to test pattern and color, said Senior Master Sgt. Jacqueline Dean, the uniform board superintendent.

"The color scheme is only one of many improvements we are testing," Sergeant Dean said.

A small, select group of testers will wear the newest pattern. The solid tiger-striped

pattern with its dominant blue overtones is gone. The latest pixelated test pattern has a more subdued color scheme and is not nearly as distinctive as the one unveiled at the start in August 2003; yet it provides the distinctiveness Airmen have requested, officials said.

"We have sufficient input from Airmen throughout the Air Force to ensure that our uniform decisions are on target with regard to wear, ease of maintenance and fit," Sergeant Dean said. "We kept hearing throughout the test that Airmen loved the wash-and-wear feature and the fit. The design of the uniform will essentially stay the same, with minor modifications based [on] the wear-testers' recommendations."

General Jumper will announce the final decisions regarding the new utility uniform

once the test data are analyzed and presented. Determination is expected within the next two months, officials said.

The new design represents a uniform that could be universally worn in all environments, Sergeant Dean said.

The unique fit and design will remain the same, as Air Force officials said they want a distinctive uniform for Airmen that fits better and is easier and less expensive to maintain.

"There really wasn't much that Airmen didn't like about the design of the uniform," she said, basing her comment on the large volume of feedback the board received via e-mail, surveys, focus groups and online questionnaires. "We really did capture what they needed and what they wanted."

Did you know?

Cell phones must be solid or covered in black, silver, dark blue, or gray, and must be conservative. May be clipped to

waistband or purse or carried in left hand. Only one may be worn on the uniform belt.

Cell phones will not be used while walking in uniform. Hands-free headset is not authorized.



Guard, Reserve on fast track

DOVER INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY, Del. — Pit crews of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve No. 29 car rush to get driver Kerry Earnhardt out of the pits during the NASCAR Busch Series race Sept. 25. ESGR is a Defense Department volunteer organization that

provides free education and consultation for employers of guardsmen and reservists. Its goal is to support America's employers who share their employees with the nation to ensure national security. Mr. Earnhardt finished 23rd. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor)

New law sinks 'Check Floating' practice

By Capt. Charles Warren
12th Flying Training Wing Legal Office

The practice of "floating" a check until payday is now a thing of the past as of Oct. 28 when the new federal Check Clearing for the 21st Century Act, also known as Check 21, became effective.

"Check floating" occurs when people write checks a few days before payday, figuring that by the time their check hits the bank there will be money in the account to cover it. With Check 21, money will be withdrawn immediately from a person's account when he or she writes a check. The new federal law is designed to help banks efficiently process more checks electronically. This means that debits of a

person's checking account will occur in minutes not days.

Paper checks as record-keeping devices are also a thing of the past. Instead, banks will replace canceled checks with substitute checks — paper copies of electronic images of a person's original check.

Consumers must have a substitute check in order to exercise all of their rights under Check 21 for the re-crediting of their account in the event of transactional error.

Consumers should note they probably will not be able to access funds from checks deposited in their account any sooner because the new law does not shorten check hold times for banks.

This means people may not be able to withdraw money from their account the

same day a deposit is made.

Here are a few tips to help people adjust their banking habits in response to Check 21:

- Check your balance. Ensure you have sufficient funds in your checking account to cover any purchases made by check.

- Request substitute checks. Although banks are not required by law to issue them to you, be persistent in requesting that substitute checks accompany your bank statements.

- Ask for a re-credit in writing. If you suffer a loss relating to a substitute check you received, notify your bank in writing within 40 days of your bank statement and request a re-credit to your account. Don't forget to include the substitute check.

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Reserve magazine changes Web address

The official magazine of the Air Force Reserve is getting a new Web address.

Citizen Airman's new address is www.afrc.af.mil/news/citizenairman/index.htm

In addition to moving to a new Web home, Citizen Airman, published for more than 76,000 reservists across the globe, is getting a new look. The changes, which took effect with the publication of the October issue of the magazine, were made to bring more continuity to Air Force Reserve Command's presentation of official news and information on the Web.

RPA orders reminder

ARPC distributes upwards of 80,000 copies of orders and amendments to IMAs and major commands annually so members can perform annual and special tours. In addition, ARPC receives numerous requests to redistribute orders due to members losing them, throwing them away, destroying them, and forgetting to take them on their tours.

Orders are official government documents and should be safeguarded and saved for current and future reference.

Treatment available for combat stress

DOD health officials are trying to reach out to those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who may be suffering from combat-related mental-health problems or post-traumatic stress disorder.

A recently released first-of-its-kind medical report that showed frontline action adversely affected the mental health of some servicemembers.

Combat veterans and their families should watch for changes in behavior that can range from mild depressive and anxiety symptoms to trouble sleeping and nightmares, but the problems are not always mild, and the symptoms are not always subtle. Servicemembers can get confidential counseling through Military One Source program.

The 24-hour-a-day service is for servicemembers and their families, and provides quick, professional assistance with problems.

For more information, read the Air Force Print News story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008174>.

CONUS COLA Information

Reservists are not entitled to CONUS cost of living allowance for the first 139 days of a call or order to active duty. The exception is a contingency order.

CONUS COLA is only paid to members who are in the commuting area, and is based on the zip code on the orders. Additional information can be found at <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/ccola.html>.

Division realigns branches

In an effort to streamline the retirement processes and improve customer service the Retirement Eligibility Division has realigned

their branches. This new alignment more effectively balances the workload between the three branches using the last two numbers of the member's Social Security number:

- Branch A – 00 – 31
- Branch B – 32 – 67
- Branch C – 68 – 99

What does this mean? It's the elimination of fragmentation between the branches; technicians no longer are delayed waiting for an audit but are responsible for working the entire retirement process from beginning to end.

Now when members call questioning the status of their pay forms or the number of retirement points, technicians will have ready access to everything needed to answer their questions. It means pay accounts will be established earlier so retiring members receive their pay on time. It means improved customer service.

DoD Transition Portal

The Department of Defense Transition Portal Web site offers a significant amount of information for demobilizing troops to help them transition back to civilian life. The site offers a downloadable pre-separation guide that includes an individual transition plan, information on making a career change, employment assistance, relocation assistance, education and training, finances, health and life insurance and much more.

USERRA is great for those folks who had a job before they were deployed. For those who didn't, www.dodtransportal.org can help. For additional transition assistance go to www.taonline.com

Hire Vets First

The Department of Labor and the President's National Hire Veterans Committee has launched "Hire Vets First" campaign. This campaign strives to heighten employer awareness about the employability of veterans.

MilitaryStars is currently working with hundreds of employers who understand the value of military experience and want to hire the best candidates upon their departure from the military. MilitaryStars is committed to helping veterans keep their career on track by presenting exceptional career opportunities that best complement their background, talents and goals. The goal is to assist veterans in growing and developing a long-term career with a reputable and respected company.

Members who find themselves or fellow veterans in career transition can visit www.militarystars.com. They offer free services to veteran job seekers including several Military Career Fairs each year that feature some of the top "military friendly" employers in the country, as well as job listings.

Operation Blue to Green

Under Operation Blue to Green, a new DoD program intended

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to rebalance the size of the military, Airmen and Sailors can continue their service by transferring to the active duty Army or the Army Reserve.

The program comes at a time when the Air Force plans to reduce its force by 20,000 Airmen and the Navy to cut 8,000 Sailors, while Army strength may see a significant increase by numbers not yet determined.

The program will focus on grades E-1 through E-5, but other grades, including commissioned officers and cadets, will be considered to meet Army needs.

Basic requirements of the Blue to Green program are:

- Be physically fit
- Meet Army height and weight standards
- Eight-year service obligation still applies
- Minimum term of service is three years
- Have an approved DD Form 368, "Request for Conditional Release"

The Army plans to give bonuses to Airmen and Sailors whose skills convert to the Army's most-needed MOSs. Those transferring will have no break in service and won't lose 'banked' Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

•There are 120 Air Force specialty codes that will transfer into 37 Army MOSs, and the Navy has 112 ratings that will transfer into 42 Army MOSs. Those are 'Job One,' but we're looking at others as well.

They are also looking for officers, primarily junior officers. (*Chief, Army Enlisted Accessions Div, Jul 04*)

•For more info on Operation Blue to Green, members can go to <http://www.goarmy.com/btg/index.jsp>.

'Military One Source' helps with problems

Military One Source is a one-stop place to go whenever servicemembers or family members need assistance with any kind of problem anytime, worldwide. Military One Source provides information on a gamut of situations: from needing a plumber in the middle of the night to fix a broken pipe, to needing veterinary service for a sick dog. It also helps families new to an area find childcare, or information about the school system and summer jobs. People should not be afraid or embarrassed to seek help from Military One Source. The person at the other end of the phone is not going to be judgmental about the situation.

Military One Source toll-free numbers are (800) 342-9647 in the United States, (800) 3429-6477 outside the United States (where available) and (484) 530-5747 to call international collect.

For more information on Military One Source, read the Air Force Print News story at

<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008091>.

Air force approves 'V' for heroism award

The "V" device, to represent valor, has been authorized for Distinguished Flying Crosses awarded for heroism. It allows any

Reserve, Guard or active duty Airmen or Air Force DFC recipient honored for heroism on or after Sept. 18, 1947, to wear the "V" device on the DFC. Airmen may purchase the "V" device from an Army and Air Force Exchange Service clothing sales store or contact their servicing military personnel flight awards and decorations section for issue. Veterans may purchase the device through exchange or commercial sources.

For more information, read the Air Force Print News story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008077>.

PME incorporates many changes

Professional Military Education students now exercise under a more formal structure as part of the Fit-to-Fight initiative. Students perform physical conditioning three days a week to reinforce the school's new focus. Every program complies with guidance provided in Air Force Instruction 10-248.

Some of the other changes course attendees will notice a focus on combat leadership throughout enlisted PME. This includes lessons such as national security strategy, joint-force components, expeditionary Airmen, terrorism and force protection, force packaging and joint perspectives. The major difference in curriculum is a focus on the combat environment verses a business environment.

For more information, read the Air Force Print News story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008222>.

PME Career Development Courses

Members who need to enroll in a mandatory Career Development Course or a Professional Military Education course by correspondence can go to <http://arpc.afrc.af.mil>, Main Subjects, Education and Training then find the CDC PME ORDER FORM. Members must ensure that they fill out the form completely.

The Test Control Office is the nearest installation nearest the member. If the location is not an approved AF TCO, ARPC will contact the member. Once an order is placed, the materials/test should arrive in 4-5 weeks.

People who need to change their mailing address, TCO address, request an extension or have a questions can use this form.

The ARPC Web site will indicate (under COURSE CATALOG), what courses are available, enrollment requirements, and enrollment limitations. Questions regarding the Web site, can be directed to arpc.dpmatmilttrng@arpc.denver.mil.

New joint command ready to defend

A new headquarters at Fort Lesley J. McNair, D.C., will consolidate the military mission to help defend the nation's capital. The Joint Force Headquarters-National Capital Region will guard America's center of gravity.

The command unites all Defense Department elements and the

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Coast Guard. The Army Military District of Washington, the Naval District of Washington, the Marine Corps National Capital Region Command and the Air Force's 11th and 89th wings are the major component commands in the new joint force.

Normally, there will be between 3,000 and 4,000 people in the command.

For more information, go to the Air Force Link story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008747>.

Airmen receive AEF ID cards

All Airmen are now receiving air and space expeditionary force identification cards. Card usage ended during the height of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom because six to eight AEFs were deployed at the same time.

The information on the cards provides predictability and stability by allowing Airmen to plan around deployments to schedule leave, professional military education and temporary duties. The front of the card tells Airmen their assigned AEF pair, and the back shows the new 20-month cycle chart, which began in September.

For more information, go to the Air Force Link story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008532>.

Lodging not available at TDY station

The TDY locality per diem rate or the AEA ceiling for the location where lodging is obtained is used for computation only when a member is TDY at a place where neither Government nor commercial quarters are available.

Note: This subparagraph applies only when the locality per diem rate for the lodging location is higher than the locality per diem rate for the TDY location. The higher per diem rate must be authorized/approved by the authorizing/order-issuing official.

Combined Federal Campaign kicks off

The 2004-2005 Combined Federal Campaign began Sept. 1 in the continental United States and runs through Dec. 15. Last year, federal workers reached into their pockets to donate nearly \$250 million during the campaign. On average, one in four federal employees or their family members will benefit from the CFC charities this year alone. Donors may designate which charity, or charities, receives their money by filling out a pledge card. Contributions can be in cash, check or by payroll deduction.

For more information go to the CFC Web site at www.opm.gov/cfc or the Air Force Link story at <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123008565>.

Improved ESGR Web site access

To help improve access to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Web site for members of the military and those unable to access Web sites outside of the .mil domain, ESGR has recently activated www.esgr.mil.

Please note - this is not a new Web site but simply provides additional access capabilities for those previously unable to access the ESGR Web site.

The ESGR Web site may now be accessed via www.esgr.com, www.esgr.org, www.esgr.net or www.esgr.mil.

In addition, an initiative to activate esgr.gov is also in process to ensure no matter what domain is typed, it will allow access to the ESGR Web site.

As a reminder, the ESGR Web site is filled with helpful information for Employers, Military Members and Committee Volunteers.

Visit the Web site today to learn more about how people can help gain and maintain employer support for the Guard and Reserve!

DEET: Don't deploy from home without it

Whether hiking in the woods back home or serving in the sands of the Middle East, Airmen need to shield themselves from biting insects with a repellent.

The active ingredient in most skin-applied repellents is N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide, commonly referred to as DEET. It's a must on almost every deployment checklist and for good reason. It protects troops on the ground from mosquitoes, deer ticks, biting flies, chiggers, fleas and other insects.

Some people are skeptical about using it, wondering how something that repels insects can be a good thing to put on their hands, arms, faces and necks.

About 4,200 Air Force reservists are currently mobilized and about 2,290 volunteers are serving for 90 days or more in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Approved by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1957 as an active ingredient, DEET was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1946. According to the EPA, about 38 percent of the American public uses DEET-based products.

The human body emits carbon dioxide and that is what attracts many insects. It acts like a homing device, guiding mosquitoes to their dinner. DEET disrupts an insect's ability to detect carbon dioxide.

The Consumer Specialty Products Association lists some important tips to keep in mind when using DEET:

- ☞ Always follow instructions
- ☞ Do not soak clothing or bedding with DEET-base repellents
- ☞ The more DEET in the product, the longer the protection lasts
- ☞ DEET-based repellents should be applied to exposed, unbroken skin

Additional information about DEET and protection from insects can be found at www.deetonline.org and by calling 1-888-NO-BITES (888-662-4837). (AFRC News Service)



Holiday mailing dates, policies set

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

The dates for mailing items to and from overseas locations in time for the holidays are fast approaching, and officials at the Military Postal Service Agency here have suggestions for ensuring packages and letters arrive on time.

"If packages are mailed earlier, it may be possible to use space-available mail or parcel post service, which would result in less expensive postage rates," said Mark DeDomenic, the agency's chief of operations.

The recommended deadlines for sending mail from the United States to all overseas military mailing addressees for the holidays are listed below.

— **Parcel post:** Nov. 13.

— **Space-available mail:** Nov. 27.

— **Parcel airlift mail:** Dec. 4.

— **Priority and first-class letters/cards:** Dec. 11 (Dec. 6 for APO 093).

— **Express mail military service:** Dec. 20 (Not applicable for APO 093).

Mr. DeDomenic said these dates can also be observed by customers sending mail from overseas locations to the United States, and that all dates may vary depending on location.

People mailing packages need to be aware that customs forms are required on all international mail, and that shipments should

be properly packaged before sending them overseas, Mr. DeDomenic said.

"Always use strong boxes with plenty of packing material, such as newspaper or popcorn," he said. "Strapping or reinforced tape is strongly recommended. Ensure fragile items are packed tightly and individually wrapped in bubble wrap."

Also critical to getting packages overseas on time is ensuring they have the correct mailing address.

The No. 1 reason for delayed delivery of mail is improper or incomplete addresses, Mr. DeDomenic said.

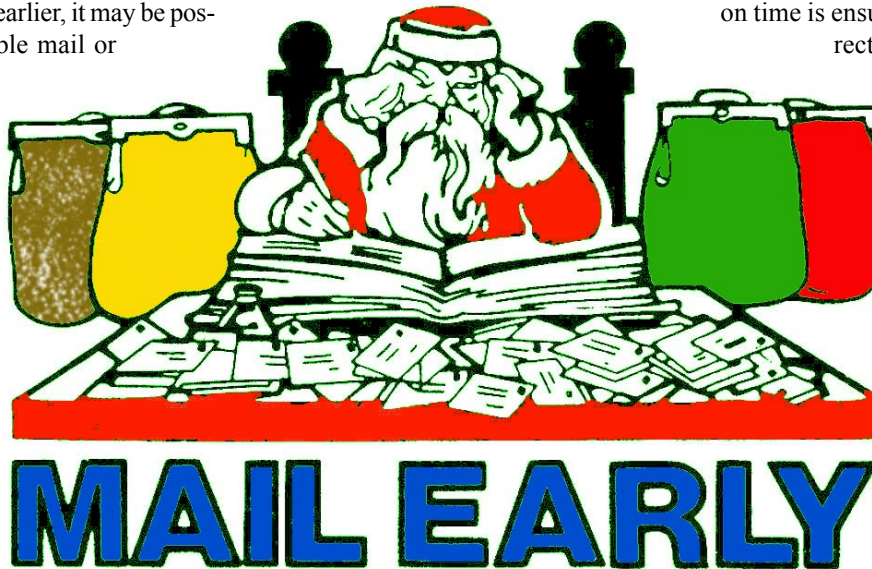
He said people sending mail to an overseas APO or FPO, should not use the geographical location.

For example, do not use Baghdad, Iraq, on the address. This will

cause the mail to be placed into the international mail system and may cause severe delays.

Because of security restrictions, mass-mailing operations such as Operation Dear Abby or the "Any Servicemember" mailing programs are not being supported by the agency, Mr. DeDomenic said.

Agency officials encourage servicemembers to support the publicly available Web sites that allow the American public to write supportive letters to them.



*From the men and women of the
Air Reserve Personnel Center ...
Happy Holidays*